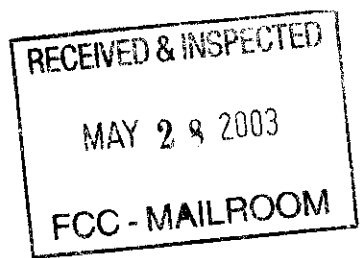




EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

ORIGINAL

DIOCESE OF MARQUETTE



Office of Communication
Loreene Zeno Koskey, Director

P.O. Box 548 347 Rock Street

Marquette, MI 49855
Phone: 906-227-9129
800-562-9745, ext. 129
Fax: 906-226-6941

May 23, 2003

Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary
445 12th St., S.W.
Room TW-204B
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: Informal Comments, MB Dkt. No. 02-277;
MM Dkt. No. 01-235; MM Dkt. No. 01-317;
MM Dkt. No. 00-244**

Dear Ms. Secretary:

The Diocese of Marquette ("Diocese") submits the following informal comments in the above-referenced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, released September 23, 2002.

The Diocese has long been concerned about the erosion of local news and public affairs programming caused by the FCC's and Congress' weakening of broadcast ownership limits, and the FCC's elimination of broadcast rules which formerly had permitted the FCC and the community to monitor broadcasters to help ensure that broadcasters served their community of license with programs which meet community needs and interests. Locally, one area broadcast firm recently cut its news director position and it has become increasingly difficult to get public service announcements aired without purchasing some air time.

The Diocese urges the FCC to refrain from making changes in the current rules which (a) prohibit cross-ownership of broadcast stations and newspapers in the same community, (b) limit the number of television and radio stations a single entity may own in a single community, (c) set a national ownership cap for television station at an already overly generous 35% of households, and (d) prohibit common ownership of major television networks. Cable television already is dominated by the same companies that dominate television and satellite systems and the programming on those systems, and those same companies are moving into providing Internet access. Neither cable nor the Internet (whether offered through cable or telephone companies) offer meaningful alternatives to the already scarce supply of truly local news and local public affairs programs on over-the-air television and radio.

Respectfully submitted,


Loreene Zeno Koskey
Director of Communication

No. of Copies rec'd 0
List A B C D E

cc: Sen. Carl Levin
Sen. Debbie Stabenow
Rep. Bart Stupak